March 23, 1969

Dr.John K. Lattimer
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Dear Dr. Lattimer,

At the time the press devoted extensive attention to your October appearance in Illinois and your comments on the Warren Commission's so-called "single-bullet theory" I was on a speaking tour. Until now, various things have kept me from devoting the time to your work that I intend. It sounds fascinating. If you have proved what the Warren Commission could and did not, in fact, did not even try to, then we are all in your debt.

I am writing to ask for a copy of your remarks and all the available information on your own experiments, analysis and conclusions. I would like very much to cite these things in my own writing. If you have charts, such as of the projected path of the bullet through the President's neck, I'd like to use them, too. I assume you computed the possible angles, vertical and horizontal, at whatever time you estimate that particular shot was fired.

If you drew upon the Commission's unpublished material on this subject, in my experience much more voluminous than what it did publish, I do hope you cite it so I can credit you with finding what I did not.

One of the things that has interested me most is accounting for the mertal remaining in the governor's tibia. The Commission does not give us its size, weight or description. How do you attribute it to Bullet 399?

Press reports indicate you fired similar bullets into wood. Dr. John Nichols also has done this. However, I am troubled by the use of wood when the Commission assures us the closest approximation of human tissue is gelatin and when gelatin was used, by the Army experts and by CBS, no single bullet fired had the energy to transit the even then inadequate representation of the history attributed to Bullet 399.

Another aspect of your work that will interest me is how you cope with 100% of the Commission's evidence, that such a bullet could not have inflicted the damage to the Connally wrist without considerable deformation of a character lacking in Bullet 399. In this connection, all the evidence says there would have been marking of the bullet by the bone it allegedly hit, also lacking. Your explanation of this is something to which I also look forward anxiously.

You are cited as having fired three shots in 6½ seconds. Your manner of timing also will interest me. The Commission did not count the time before the actual firing of the first shot. Did you?

There are a number of unscholarly omissions in the FBI-Commission work. I presume you have overcome these, especially in these respects: proving that, in fact, Bullet 399 was, in fact "found" on Governor Connally's stretcher and no other; proving that it was, in fact, used in the assassination (as by analysis of the residues that where never tested by the FBI or the Commission); proving by spectrography or other scientific tests that it was of the same origin as the metal retrieved from the car and its occupants; and proving, in a minimum necessity for alleging only three shots were fired, that all the metal required to have been shed by Bullet 399 came from no other accurse, and that all the other metal came from the bullet said to have exploded from impact on the President's head and no other source.

You are quoted as saying the slight flattening at the rear end of Bullet 399 is a significant deformity, considering the history attributed to it. You are also quoted as having said, "We undertook to deform similar bullets in the same way..." What the news reports do not give is the fact that you used bones or a suitable representation of the rib, wrist and tibia. I'd appreciate an explanation of what, to me, would be the only meaningful experiment, proving that all of this bone could have been struck by a bullet neither marked by that bone or deformed more than Bullet 399.

All the medical experts seem to have found more metal having been shed in the wrist injury alone than can be accounted as missing from Bullet 399. This, also, I'd like explained. Likewise, although the Warren Report is silent on the subject, there was metal in Governor Conally's chest. Were you able to determine the size and weight of this fragment or these fragments? Could you, without this information, substantiate the so-called "single-bullet theory"?

You are quoted as having said the fatal bullet entered the "back of the President's head...exited at the front..." I am aware that the Report does say the bullet entered the back. Have you any other source? This is not what the panel appointed by Attorney General Clark found in reading the X-rays. The Commission, also, did not say the bullet exited the front. If you have established this and were not misquoted you have a significant accomplishment that interests me very much. Perhaps, in this connection, you also have an explanation for the hitherto unreported mass found at the base of the brain, or of the failure to study the left half of the brain, or to report whether there was a missle path through any part of it, etc.

You are also quoted as having definite knowledge of the manner in which the telescopic sight was attached to the rifle at the moment it was allegedly used. I do not recall any such evidence and would appreciate a citation to it. Then you are said to have declared that this, in effect, made the shooting more accurate. I ask if you have information on this other than at close distance and, if you do not, how you projected the error for the proper distance. Unless I have been misinformed, carrying the error from the close distance to the alleged actual one would greatly increase the distance between the point in the sight at the alleged actual distance and the body. After this, the need for shims under the sight at Edgewood Arsenal, before the rifle could be used, would still require explanation.

After I have had a chance to study your work, possibly I will have more questions. I hope you will be able to find time to answer them. This, to me, is much too vital a national issue for questions to remain unasked or unanswered, or for assumptions to be substituted for fact.

Sincerely,
Harold Weisberg

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